

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-9, 11-22, 24-26, 29, and 30 are pending.

Claims 10, 13, 23, and 26-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102 based on Nishikawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,333,627).

Claims 12 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103 in view of Nishikawa.

It is noted with appreciation that claims 11 and 24 are deemed allowable if rewritten in proper independent form.

Without conceding the merits the claim rejections, the applicant amends claims 11 and 24 to be in independent form in order to move forward with prosecution of the instant application. Accordingly claims 11 and 24 have been amended to incorporate their respective base claims, namely claims 10 and 23. Claims depending from claims 10 and 23 have been amended to maintain proper antecedent basis. Claims 10 and 23 have been canceled without prejudice.

Claims 27 and 28 have been canceled without conceding the merits of their rejection.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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